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(54) Title: LUBRICANT COMPOSITION FOR LUBRICATING A CONVEYOR BELT

(57) Abstract: Use of a liquid composition for lubricating conveyor belts is provided, said liquid composition being suitable for producing a "dry" lubricant film on a surface by discontinuous application thereof, wherein the liquid composition can also be used for continuous application to a conveyor belt surface, with or without further dilution with water, to remove incidental spillages of extraneous material from the conveyor belt surface without loss of the required lubricity. This liquid composition was found to exhibit remarkably good durability.

LUBRICANT COMPOSITION FOR LUBRICATING A CONVEYOR BELT

Field of the invention

The present invention relates to lubricant solutions 5 suitable for producing a lubricant film. More particularly, the invention relates to such lubricant solutions and their use as a lubricant for the lubrication of conveyor belts. These conveyor belts are generally used for the transport of glass, plastic or cardboard containers, particularly 10 plastic containers of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) or polycarbonate, and metal cans.

Background of the invention

Known conveyor belt lubricants are employed in applications 15 in which good gliding contact between solid surfaces, for instance glass and metal, or plastic and metal must be ensured.

These applications include bottle filling and conveying plants, where the lubricants are applied to the conveyor 20 belts to ensure the trouble-free conveyance of bottles on the belt. In many known systems, a soap such as potash-based soft soap is used as the lubricant.

As a substitute for the soap-based lubricants, a variety of synthetic conveyor belt lubricants including certain amine 25 compounds are being used. These synthetic lubricants have been described in, for example, EP-A-372,628, US-A-5,073,280 and EP-A-767,825.

These conveyor belt lubricants are generally supplied as 30 concentrates and use concentrations of such concentrates

are usually prepared by applying typical dilution rates of 0.2-1.0% by weight concentrate in water depending on the friction requirement and the water type.

Such aqueous belt lubricants having a use concentration of 5 the active lubricating ingredients of significantly less than 1% by weight have been satisfactorily applied for many years.

On the other hand, the application of these aqueous lubricants has also resulted in high water usage rates and 10 relatively high effluent costs for the user.

Furthermore, when used as conventionally intended these aqueous lubricants flow off the conveyor track surface treated therewith, resulting in a waste of chemical and water, and causing a slippery floor surface which may 15 constitute a hazard to operators working in the immediate environment.

Lubrication in a wide range of lubricating applications involving moving metal parts including metal shaping 20 operations, such as drilling, cutting and drawing, by means of the deposition of a lubricant film has been known for many years. For instance, US-A-5,549,836 discloses a mineral oil-free aqueous lubricant composition useful for producing a lubricant film and suitable for use in the 25 above-mentioned types of lubricating applications involving moving metal parts.

We have now surprisingly found that certain specific liquid formulations suitable for producing a "dry" lubricant film, 30 can be advantageously used as a conveyor belt lubricant,

whereby the above-described problems observed when using the aqueous conveyor belt lubricants of the prior art are effectively overcome.

In particular, we have found that such liquid formulations 5 have both good lubricating properties and adequate cleaning characteristics.

In this connection, a "dry" lubricant film is defined as a lubricant film which remains on the surface onto which it is applied as a liquid, and which, consequently does not 10 flow off, or is easily removable from, said surface.

Definition of the invention

Accordingly, the present invention provides the use of a liquid composition suitable for producing a "dry" lubricant 15 film on a surface by discontinuous application of said composition, for lubricating conveyor belts, said liquid composition comprising up to 95% by weight of an aqueous phase and also being suitable for continuous application to a conveyor belt surface, with or without 20 further dilution with water, to remove incidental spillages of extraneous material from the conveyor belt surface without loss of the required lubricity.

The required lubricity is defined to be the lubricity 25 which ensures trouble-free operation of the conveyor belt concerned.

In another aspect, the present invention provides a method of lubricating a conveyor belt, comprising the steps of

- 30 (i) formulating a liquid composition suitable for producing a "dry" lubricant film on a surface by

discontinuous application of said composition, said composition comprising up to 95% by weight of an aqueous phase and also being suitable for continuous application to a conveyor belt surface, with or 5 without further dilution with water, to remove incidental spillages of extraneous material from the conveyor belt surface without loss of the required lubricity, and
(ii) applying said liquid composition to the conveyor 10 belt as a thin "dry" lubricant film.

Detailed description of the invention

The liquid composition of the present invention was found to be very suitable for lubricating conveyor belts.
15 For establishing a "dry" lubricant film on the conveyor belt, only a minor amount of said liquid composition is needed. Typically an amount of 2-20 ml of the liquid composition is sufficient when applied every 20 minutes and fed to a normal size single conveyor belt. Said liquid 20 composition is applied to the conveyor belt in undiluted form, either manually or by means of an automatic applicator.

In contrast to the aqueous conveyor belt lubricants of the 25 prior art, the liquid composition of the present invention does not need to be fed continuously to the conveyor belt treated therewith.

In this connection, the friction coefficient (μ) being a measure for the friction between the containers (e.g.

bottles, carton boxes, metal cans) transported by the conveyor belt and the belt surface, is of importance. It has been observed that the friction coefficient obtained after ceasing the application of the liquid material of the 5 invention to the surface of the belt, is sufficiently low for a much longer time period than when using the aqueous conveyor belt lubricants of the prior art. In other words, the durability -being a measure of the time period during which the liquid of the invention adequately 10 lubricates the conveyor belt after cessation of the application thereof to said belt- is much better for the liquid composition of the invention.

When spillages of the contents of the containers 15 transported by the treated conveyor belt would occur, said conveyor belt can be adequately cleaned by taking one or more of the following actions:

- raising the feed rate of the liquid of the invention;
- adding water to said liquid.

20

The liquid composition

The liquid composition of the invention may be effectively water-based. In that case, it comprises an aqueous phase which suitably constitutes about 10-95% by weight, 25 preferably 50-90% by weight, of the overall composition.

Alternatively, the liquid of the invention may be substantially non-aqueous, and comprise less than 10% by weight of water.

If said liquid is water-based, it preferably contains from 1-15% by weight of a volatile water-miscible solvent such as methanol, ethanol and isopropanol, as an aid in assisting the evaporation of the water from the lubricant 5 film deposited on the conveyor belt when using the liquid. When present, the solvent forms part of the aqueous phase.

If the liquid of the invention is water-based, it may be desirable to incorporate an effective amount of an anti-10 rust additive.

In order to obtain adequate disinfection in case of spillages, it may also be desirable to incorporate a biocide.

15 **Silicone oil**

The liquid composition of the invention may desirably comprise a silicone oil and an aqueous phase. This type of liquid composition is effectively a silicone emulsion in water.

20 Favourable results in terms of durability were obtained when this liquid composition was applied on conveyor belts used for transporting containers selected from polyethylene terephthalate bottles, polycarbonate bottles, laminated cardboard containers and metal cans made from steel and 25 aluminium. Furthermore, for obtaining most favourable results with this type of liquid, said conveyor belts are preferably made of plastic, polyacetal or polyamide.

This liquid composition of the invention preferably 30 comprises:

10-95% by weight of the aqueous phase; and
1-55% by weight of the silicone oil.

More preferably, the concentration of the silicone oil in
this liquid composition is 10-40% by weight.

5

Suitable silicone oils are polydimethyl siloxane fluids
having viscosities of from 1000 to 30.000 centistokes.
The silicone oil which is homogeneously dispersed in the
aqueous phase, is particularly suitable for assisting
10 penetration of the liquid composition of the invention into
difficult to reach areas when applied to the conveyor belt.

Vegetable oil/mineral oil

Alternatively, the liquid composition of the invention may
15 desirably comprise an oil selected from vegetable oils,
mineral oils and mixtures thereof, and, optionally, water.
This type of liquid composition preferably comprises:
10-90% by weight of the oil, and 10-50% by weight of water.

This preferred type of liquid which is effectively an
20 emulsion of the water in the oil, was found to be very
suitable for lubricating conveyor belts used for
transporting any type of containers. Best results were
obtained when said belts were used for transporting
containers selected from glass bottles, steel and aluminium
25 cans, cardboard containers, plastic bottles and plastic
crates. Said conveyor belts may be made of any type of
material.

Desirably, the oil is homogeneously dispersed in the
aqueous phase.

Most preferred for use in the liquid of the invention are vegetable oils such as rapeseed oil, soya oil, palm oil, olive oil, sunflower oil and mixtures thereof. Synthetic oils such as glyceryl trioleate are also preferred as a 5 constituent of said liquid.

Vegetable oils are particularly desirable in view of their environmental acceptability.

Polyhydric alcohol

10 Particularly when intended for use on conveyor belts made of plastic material such as those made of polyacetal and polyamide, the liquid of the invention may suitably comprise a polyhydric alcohol. This type of liquid was found to show good lubricating performance when applied on 15 this type of belt which may be used for transporting any type of container. However, this liquid may also be used on steel tracks with certain types of containers.

This liquid of the invention may be either substantially non-aqueous or contain 10-80% by weight of water.

20 It preferably contains the polyhydric alcohol in an amount of at least 20% by weight.

Suitable polyhydric alcohol are glycerine (i.e. propane 1,2,3-triol), propylene glycol and ethylene glycol.

25 PTFE

In various embodiments of the invention in which the liquid composition includes an aqueous phase, it is particularly preferred that said liquid composition includes polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) resin, in the form of an

ultrafine particle dispersion of the resin incorporated in the aqueous phase.

Particularly, when said liquid composition comprises a vegetable and/or mineral oil, or a polyhydric alcohol (see 5 above), it is preferred to aid said PTFE resin to this liquid composition. In such cases, the PTFE considerably improves the lubricity and wear properties of the "dry" lubricant film produced by the liquid of the invention, when in use.

10 Preferably, the PTFE will constitute 2-25% by weight, more preferably 2-10% by weight, of the liquid composition.

Surfactant

A wide variety of surfactants selected from anionic, 15 nonionic, cationic and amphoteric surfactants, may be effectively used in the lubricant composition of the present invention.

It is believed that these surfactants improve the stability of the liquid of the invention particularly when it 20 contains an aqueous phase. These surfactants may also improve the chemical compatibility of the liquid of the invention with the construction material of certain containers transported by the belts treated with said liquid. In particular, it was found that anionic 25 surfactants may improve the PET compatibility of a liquid composition containing a polyhydric alcohol such as glycerine.

The concentration of the surfactant material in the liquid of the invention is preferably in the range of 0.1-10% by weight, more preferably 0.2-6% by weight.

5 Further information on this surfactant material can be found in "Surface Active Agents", Vol.I, by Schwartz & Perry, Interscience 1949, and "Surface Active Agents", Vol. II, by Schwartz, Perry & Berch (Interscience 1959).

10 A particularly suitable type of surfactant material is nonionic surfactant. Nonionic surfactants are well-known in the art. They normally consist of a water-solubilising polyalkoxylene or a mono- or di-alkanolamide group in chemical combination with an organic hydrophobic group 15 derived, for example, from alkylphenols in which the alkyl group contains from about 6 to about 12 carbon atoms, dialkyl phenols in which each alkyl group contains from 6 to 12 carbon atoms, primary, secondary and tertiary aliphatic alcohols (or alkyl-capped derivatives thereof), 20 preferably having from 8 to 20 carbon atoms, monocarboxylic acids having from 10 to 24 carbon atoms in the alkyl group and polyoxy propylenes. Also common are fatty acid mono- and dialkanolamides in which the alkyl group of the fatty acid radical contains from 10 to about 20 carbon atoms and 25 the alkoxy group having from 1 to 3 carbon atoms. In any of the mono- and di- alkanolamide derivatives, optionally there may be a polyoxyalkylene moiety joining the latter groups and the hydrophobic part of the molecule. In all polyalkoxylene containing surfactants, the 30 polyalkoxylene moiety preferably consists of from 2 to 20

groups of ethylene oxide or ethylene oxide and propylene oxide. Among the latter class, particularly preferred are those ethoxylated nonionics which are the condensation products of fatty alcohols with from 9 to 15 carbon atoms 5 condensed with from 3 to 11 moles of ethylene oxide.

Examples of these are the condensation products of C11-C13 alcohols with (say) 3 to 7 moles of ethylene oxide.

Another class of suitable nonionics include the alkyl polysaccharides (polyglycosides/oligosaccharides), such as 10 described in US-A-3,640,998; US-A-3,346,558 and US-A-4,223,129.

Examples of anionic surfactants suitable to be included in the lubricant composition of the present invention, are 15 alkali metal, alkaline earth metal, or ammonium salts of alkylbenzene sulphonates having from 10 to 18 carbon atoms in the alkyl group, alkyl and alkylether sulphates having from 10 to 24 carbon atoms in the alkyl group, the alkylether sulphates having from 1 to 5 ethylene oxide 20 groups, and olefin sulphonates prepared by sulphonation of C10-C24 alpha-olefins and subsequent neutralisation and hydrolysis of the sulphonation reaction product.

Use

25 Dispensing equipment developed for dosing the liquid composition of the invention has been designed to apply the liquid directly to the surface of the conveyor belt. Since relatively expensive neat product is applied, this equipment has been developed such that any spillage of 30 liquid material (e.g. by flowing under gravity away from

the treated surface or dripping down onto the floor)) is avoided so as to minimise wastage of said liquid.

Various types of applicator have been developed for feeding 5 the liquid composition onto the conveyor belt treated therewith.

If the liquid is a stable low viscosity material -such as an aqueous silicone oil containing product- then it can be accurately dosed by a metered diaphragm pump.

10 Such stable low-viscous liquids of the invention can be adequately dispensed using a brush applicator, including a brush that has internal channels through which liquid solution can be pumped into the bristles thereof. When in use, the motion of the conveyor belt spreads the lubricant 15 over the surface thereof. This dispensing method was found to be accurate and effective , especially when used for dosing low viscous material onto single conveyor belts.

Particularly if the liquid of the invention contains PTFE, 20 it is a viscous product which usually requires some degree of agitation to help and keep the PTFE particles in suspension. As a consequence, rather special measures are needed to be taken in order to adequately dispense said liquid at the point of use.

25

So as to achieve good dispensing performance if the liquid of the invention is viscous, it was found that so-called "flicker" non-contact applicators can be suitably used. These applicators are also suitable for use on multiple 30 conveyor belts.

The "flicker" unit contains a motor-driven rotating tubular brush, which picks up liquid from a sump via transfer rollers. A steel plate mounted against the brush flicks the 5 bristles as the brush rotates, to generate a mist of droplets of liquid material directed on to the surface of the conveyor belt so as to coat the belt.

As a result, an even coverage of the conveyor belt is 10 obtained, which is not affected by variation of the lubricant viscosity.

In contrast to conventional dilute lubricants of the prior art, the lubricant of the invention is usually dosed 15 sparingly with long intervals between doses.

For instance, the "flicker" applicator described above dispenses about 0.1 grams of lubricant per second . Running this unit for 5 seconds every 10 minutes was found to be sufficient to keep a 640 bottles per minute conveyor 20 belt line in operation without any problems.

When using brush applicators, a higher volume of lubricant is generally needed than with "flicker" units, so as to ensure smooth operation of the conveyor belt. On the other 25 hand, since the brush also acts as a reservoir of the liquid, longer dosing intervals are possible between dosings of liquid product to the brush applicator.

Optional ingredients

Further optional ingredients of the lubricant composition of the present invention include water softeners such as ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA) and nitrilo-5 triacetic acid (NTA) , dyes, odorants, such as lemon oil and the like, antifreeze additives to improve storability under freezing conditions, preservatives such as formaldehyde to inhibit mould growth, and buffers to optimize the pH to a value in the range of 3-10, preferably 10 4-9.

The present invention will now be further illustrated by the following non-limiting examples.

Example 1, 2, 3, A and B

Three liquid compositions according to the invention having the following compositions were prepared by thoroughly mixing its ingredients:

5

Example 1	% by weight
water	84.2
Dow Corning 346	15.0
Acetic acid (80%)	0.6
10 Formaldehyde solution (40%)	0.2

Example 2.....% by weight

Sunflower oil	55.0
Water	40.0
15 PTFE-powder	4.8
Alkylamine	0.2

Example 3.....% by weight

Glycerine	88.0
20 Dowfax 3B2	2.0
PTFE-dispersion TE 3667N	10.0

wherein: Dow Corning 346 - Silicone oil emulsion
Dowfax 3B2 - anionic surfactant
25 PTFE-dispersion TE 3667N - 60% PTFE in 40% liquid,
ex Univar Dupont.

The performance, particularly the durability, of these liquids were tested by applying them on to a single conveyor 30 belt, using a brush applicator for the liquid of example 1

respectively a "flicker" applicator for the other two liquids .

The conveyor belt used in the test was made of polyacetal material and transported PET bottles. The liquids were fed to 5 the conveyor belt, in an amount of 10 ml.

In order to test the durability of the tested liquids of the invention, several measurements of the friction coefficient (μ) were performed using a strain gauge meter. (Correx-type) 10 These measurements were carried out at the time of applying the liquids, and subsequently 10 minutes later, 20 minutes later and 30 minutes later.

The measurements of μ were carried out by holding a bottle stationary against the motion of the conveyor belt using the 15 strain gauge meter. The friction coefficient (μ) is defined as the force by the containers held against the movement of the conveyor belt divided by the weight of the containers.

For reasons of comparison, the durability of two aqueous 20 lubricants of the prior art was also tested, using the same conveyor belt configuration.

The composition of these known aqueous lubricants is shown below:

25 Example A	(%wt)
Water	85.5
Carboxylated alkyl ethoxylate	5.0
Alkyl ethoxylate	3.0
Acetic acid glacial	1.5
30 Alkyl diamine	5.0

Example B	(%wt)
Water	67.8
Potassium hydroxide (50%)	6.9
EDTA acid	1.3
5 Fatty acid	14.0
Alkane sulphonate	7.0
Preservative	3.0

These known aqueous lubricants were diluted with water to 10 obtain 0.5%wt use solutions thereof, and these use solutions were applied to the conveyor belt in an amount of 100 ml.

The results of the durability tests for both the above three liquids of the invention (Examples 1,2 and 3) and the 15 aqueous lubricants of the prior art (Examples A and B) are shown in the following table:

Friction coefficient (μ) (on polyacetal belt transporting PET-bottles)				
20 Time (min.) after	0	10	20	30
applying liquid/lubr.				
Example 1	0.10	0.115	0.115	0.115
Example 2	0.07	0.075	0.084	0.085
Example 3	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.08
25 Example A	0.14	after 5 minutes=	>0.2	
Example B	0.13	0.13	after 11 minutes=>0.2	

It can be seen that the friction coefficients obtained with the liquid compositions of the invention remain below 30 0.12 during 30 minutes, which is quite adequate for good

operation of the conveyor belt. On the other hand, when applying the aqueous lubricants of the prior art it was observed that the measured friction coefficients increased rapidly -i.e. after 5 minutes respectively 11 minutes- to 5 unacceptably high values of more than 0.2.

It can be concluded that the durability of the tested liquids of the invention is much better when applied on a conveyor belt made of polyacetal and transporting PET-bottles.

10

In addition the durability of the liquid composition of Example 2 was tested when applied on a single conveyor belt made of steel material and transporting glass bottles. The same testing method was used as for the tests on the 15 polyacetal conveyor belt transporting PET-bottles.

Furthermore, the same aqueous lubricants of the prior art were used for the comparative tests.

The following results were obtained:

20

Friction Coefficient (μ)

(on a steel belt transporting glass bottles)

Time (min.) after	0	10	20	30
Applying liquid/lubr.	0	10	20	30
Example 2	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
Example A	0.19	after about 2 minutes: >0.2		
Example B	0.16	after about 5 minutes: >0.2		

Also in this case, it can be concluded that the durability of the liquid of the invention is much better than that of 30 the aqueous lubricants of the prior art.

Example 4

For this example, experiments have been carried out to assess the effect of spillages on the slip value of a conveyor belt system.

5 In this connection, the slip value of bottles transported by a conveyor belt system is defined as the frictional resistance (in grams, as measured by e.g. a torsion meter coupled to a chart recorder) devived by the weight of said bottles. These bottles may for instance contain milk, beer 10 or other beverages.

The following test method was applied, using a conveyor belt test set-up including a conveyor belt, a motor to drive said belt, a torsion meter coupled to a chart recorder and 15 a device to keep bottles positioned on the belt at the same place.

The chart recorder is turned on and the torsion meter is calibrated with a 500 grams weight and a 700 grams weight. Subsequently, the conveyor belt is run with 8x 500 ml PET 20 bottles, whereby no water or lubricant is applied and consequently the belt is in the dry state. As a result, a base line for the belt running dry was obtained. A frictional resistance value of about 750 grams (i.e. outside the 500-700 gr range) was obtained. After about 5 25 minutes a water spray was turned on, such that during the entire remaining test period the track was being sprayed with water. This was done because in actual practice parts of the belt, particularly around the fillers- will always be wet . As a result a second base line was obtained on the

chart recorder for bottles running with just water, again showing a frictional resistance reading of about 750 grams. After a few minutes, one pipette full (3 ml) of the lubricant liquid composition of Example 3 was applied to 5 the conveyor belt, which brought the chart reading of the frictional resistance down to within the 500-700 grams range. The belt was left running for another 5 minutes. Subsequently, 500 ml of the material to be spilled, was poured over the track, the effect of which with respect to 10 the frictional resistance was registered on the chart recorder.

This procedure of applying the lubricant composition followed by the material to be spilled, was repeated for several types of spillage materials, i.e. soya milk, pepsi 15 cola, orange cordial, summer fruits cordial, and orange juice. In each case, 500 ml of the spillage material was applied.

To work out the slip value, the reading of the chart recorder for the frictional resistance (e.g. 600 gr) was 20 divided by the weight of the bottles positioned on the belt. In fact, in each case the frictional resistance before spillage was 600 grams for 8x 500 ml bottles, resulting in a slip value before spillage of 0.15.

25 The following slip values were found.

Type of spillage	slip value just after spillage	Comments
soya milk	0.1	within seconds, the slip value returns to 0.15
5 pepsi cola	0.14	after 6 minutes, the slip value slip value returns to 0.15
orange cordial	0.14	-
Summer fruits 10 cordial	0.11	after 4 minutes the slip value returns to 0.15
orange juice	0.12	after 4 minutes, the slip value returns to 0.15

The above results clearly showing that when applying a
15 liquid composition of the present invention for producing a
"dry" lubricant film, spillages donot cause a sharp rise in
slip values and even lead to temporary reductions in slip
values, are surprising and unexpected. Reason is that when
applying aqueous conveyor belt lubricants of the prior art,
20 spillages are well-known to cause an increase in frictional
resistance values whereby the transported bottles will
consequently fall over on the conveyor belt.

Claims

1. Use of a liquid composition suitable for producing a "dry" lubricant film (as defined herein) on a surface by discontinuous application of said composition, for lubricating a conveyor belt,
said composition comprising at most 95% by weight of an aqueous phase and also being suitable for continuous application to a conveyor belt surface, with or without further dilution with water, to remove incidental spillages of extraneous material from the conveyor belt surface without loss of the required lubricity.
2. Use according to claim 1, wherein the conveyor belt is a single conveyor belt and wherein an amount of 2-20 ml of the liquid composition is fed every 20 minutes to said belt.
3. Use according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the liquid composition comprises a silicone oil and the aqueous phase.
4. Use according to claim 3, wherein the liquid composition comprises:
 - (a) 10-95% by weight of the aqueous phase; and
 - (b) 1-55% by weight of the silicone oil.
5. Use according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the liquid composition comprises an oil selected from vegetable oils, mineral oils and mixtures thereof.

6. Use according to claim 5, wherein the liquid composition additionally comprises the aqueous phase.

7. Use according to claim 6, wherein the liquid composition comprises:

- 10-90% by weight of the oil selected from vegetable oils, mineral oils and mixtures thereof; and
- 10-50% by weight of water.

8. Use according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the liquid composition comprises a polyhydric alcohol.

9. Use according to claim 8, wherein the polyhydric alcohol is selected from the group consisting of glycerine, propylene glycol, and ethylene glycol.

10. Use according to claim 8 or 9, wherein the polyhydric alcohol is present in the liquid composition at a concentration of at least 20% by weight.

11. Use according to any of claims 5-10, wherein the liquid composition includes an aqueous phase, and wherein polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) resin is present in said aqueous phase in the form of an ultrafine particle dispersion of the resin.

12. Use according to claim 11, wherein the PTFE constitutes 2-25% by weight of the liquid composition.

13. Use according to any of claims 1-12, wherein the liquid composition includes a surfactant material selected from the group consisting of anionic surfactants, nonionic surfactants, cationic surfactants, amphoteric surfactants, and mixtures thereof.

14. Use according to claim 13, wherein the surfactant material is present in the composition at a concentration of 0.1-10% by weight.

15. Use according to any of claims 1-14, wherein the liquid composition is applied onto the surface of a conveyor belt using a "flicker" non-contact applicator, containing

- a motor-driven rotating tubular brush which picks up said liquid composition from a sump via transfer rollers, and
- a steel plate mounted against the brush which flicks the bristles as the brush rotates, to generate a mist of droplets of liquid material directed onto the surface of the conveyor belt.

16. Method of lubricating a conveyor belt, comprising the steps of
(i) formulating a liquid composition suitable for producing a "dry" lubricant film (as defined herein) on a surface by discontinuous application of said composition, said composition comprising up to 95% by weight of an aqueous phase and also being suitable for continuous application to a conveyor belt surface, with or without further dilution with water, to remove incidental spillages of extraneous

material from the conveyor belt surface without loss of the required lubricity, and

(ii) applying said liquid composition to the conveyor belt as a thin "dry" lubricant film.

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 C10M173/00 C10M173/02 B65G45/08
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According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 C10M B65G

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	DE 196 42 598 A (DIVERSEY GMBH) 23 April 1998 (1998-04-23) column 16, line 15 -column 17, line 10 column 18, line 1 - line 8	1,13,14, 16
Y	---	1,2,15, 16
Y	WO 98 56881 A (LAPORTE ESD LIMITED) 17 December 1998 (1998-12-17) page 1, line 6 - line 11 page 9, line 5 - line 9 page 8, line 25 - line 33	1,15
X	---	1,13,14, 16
Y	WO 95 19412 A (DIVERSEY CORP ;TAYLOUR JAMES (GB); GLOZBACH EBERHARD (DE)) 20 July 1995 (1995-07-20) page 7, line 8 -page 8, line 12	1,2,15, 16
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

° Special categories of cited documents :

- "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

21 September 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

07.12.2000

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ROTS AERT, L

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/EP 00/05684

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	WO 94 19438 A (ECOLAB INC) 1 September 1994 (1994-09-01) page 21, line 25 - line 30 ---	1,16
Y		15
X	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 1998, no. 08, 30 June 1998 (1998-06-30) & JP 10 059523 A (HAMA YOSHITADA), 3 March 1998 (1998-03-03) abstract ---	1,3,4,16
Y		15
X	US 4 149 624 A (DOUTY DONALD L ET AL) 17 April 1979 (1979-04-17) column 3, line 7 - line 68 Y column 7, line 35 - line 48 ---	1,3,4,16
Y		15
X	DATABASE WPI Section Ch, Week 199502 Derwent Publications Ltd., London, GB; Class A26, AN 1995-012645 XP002126188 & NL 9 300 742 A (DUTCH TIN DESIGN BV), 1 December 1994 (1994-12-01) abstract ---	1,3,16
Y		15
Y	US 2 670 069 A (W.J.DOBKIN) 23 February 1954 (1954-02-23) the whole document ---	15
A	US 5 549 836 A (MOSES DAVID L) 27 August 1996 (1996-08-27) cited in the application the whole document -----	1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/EP 00/05684

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.: because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. Claims Nos.: because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:

3. Claims Nos.: because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.

2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.

3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

1 or 2,3 4,12,13,14,15 and 16

Remark on Protest

The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.

No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. Claims: 1 or 2, 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16

use of a liquid composition comprising a silicone and an aqueous phase (at most 95% by weight) for lubricating conveyor belts to provide a "dry" lubricant film and remove incidental spillage without loss of required lubricity

2. Claims: 1 or 2, 5 - 7, 11 - 14, 15 and 16

use of a liquid composition comprising at most 95% by weight of water and an oil selected from vegetable, mineral oil and mixtures thereof.

3. Claims: 1 or 2, 8 - 10, 11 - 14, 15 and 16

use of a liquid composition comprising at most 95% by weight of water and a polyhydric alcohol.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Int'l Application No
PCT/EP 00/05684

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